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Board of Health activities related to health and the environment, including but not limited to smoking and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, the collection and disposal of solid waste, the operation of the ash residue landfill, recycling, the handling of leaves, grass and yard waste, sewage disposal, food service sanitation, housing, hazardous materials, especially mercury, and illegal dumping continue to be the highest priority items in the Health Department.

SMOKING: Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in our region. Grant funds for the Tobacco Control Program were cut from the state budget in June 2003. The Health Department has absorbed the responsibility of enforcing the regulations on the sale of tobacco products to minors and smoking in restaurants and public places.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT: The Board of Health oversees the contracts for the collection and disposal of solid waste, recycling, and the collection of leaves, grass and yard waste.

Rubbish and Recycling: Twelve thousand, two hundred and ninety seven (12,297) tons of solid waste were collected under the Town's contract with Pellegrino Trucking and delivered to Wheelabrator Millbury, Inc. for disposal in 2003. This is an increase of seven hundred and eighty tons (780) over the previous year. In addition, approximately twenty nine hundred (2,900) tons of paper, cardboard, cans, bottles and jars were collected in our curbside recycling program.

Residents are reminded that the Town bylaw adopted in 1994 requires that all recyclable materials be removed from the rubbish and placed separately at the curb for recycling. The Town's rubbish and recycling contract allows an increase in recycling tonnage without paying an additional charge. By recycling more, the number of tons of trash we pay to dispose is reduced. The reduction could be a significant savings for the Town if more residents recycled and those who do recycle, recycle even more.

Residents who are not recycling are in violation of the town bylaw and are causing our solid waste expenses to be higher than necessary. Please commit to the recycling program now. If you are recycling, please recycle as much of your waste as you can every week. The *Rules on Rubbish Collection and Recycling* are published at the end of this report or call the Rubbish and Recycling Info Line at 508-841-8388 for a recorded message.

Household Hazardous Products: A drop-off event for televisions and computers and other electronic wastes was held at the Highway Garage on May 3rd. Oil based paints and stains were accepted at the Highway Garage on October 18th. The Health Department

intends to hold similar events to help residents get rid of difficult to manage waste items like TVs and paints twice a year. Every third year the department will hold an event for the collection of household hazardous products like pesticides and fertilizers, antifreeze and old gasoline.

Mercury: Residents may bring their mercury fever thermometers to the Health Department at any time and receive a new digital thermometer in return. Button cell batteries, rechargeable batteries and thermostats and cell phones are also accepted at the Health Department during normal business hours. These items contain mercury and should not be thrown out with the trash.

Leaves, Grass and Yard Waste: The Town provides curbside collections for leaves and yard waste four times over an eight week period in the fall and three times in the spring. Collection weeks are advertised in the local papers and on Shrewsbury Cable on Channel 15. Leaves, grass, and yard waste must be in 30 gallon paper bags (available at local retailers) and on the curb by 7:00 A.M. on the resident's regular rubbish collection day. Bags must weigh no more than 40 lbs. The Town also provides a drop-off site for leaves, grass and yard waste at the Municipal Garage at 207-211 South Street every other Saturday from mid-June through September.

Please do not leave bags of yard waste at the Highway Department when the drop off is closed.

Burning: Residents are allowed to burn tree branches and limbs with no leaves on private property from January 15th through April 30th. A permit to burn must be obtained from the Fire Department prior to burning. Call 508-841-8522 for more details.

TITLE 5 AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL:

In 2003, soil tests were witnessed for the construction of on-site sewage disposal systems on seventeen new residential lots and eleven lots where repairs to septic systems/cesspools were needed. Preliminary soil testing was also witnessed at five proposed subdivisions.

Inspections were also conducted during the construction of 21 new systems, ten system repairs and the abandonment of seventy one existing systems where the dwellings were connected to municipal sewer.

Title 5, the state regulations on the subsurface disposal of sewage, requires an inspection of every on-site sewage disposal system prior to the sale of the property. This program provides good information for prospective buyers. A waiver of the Title 5 inspection requirement is available for properties that will be connected to municipal sewer within two years of the sale of the property.

Title 5 Loan Program: The Health Department has established a loan program for home owners with failed on-site sewage disposal systems. More than \$200,000 has been made available to the Town in state funding for this program. Contact Nancy Allen in the Health Department for additional information.

SANITATION AND DISEASE CONTROL: Robert Moore, Health Department Sanitarian witnesses soil testing and system installations and repairs, and reviews septic system design plans. He also inspects semi-public swimming pools and recreational camps for children, and investigates complaints related to housing, lead paint, illegal dumping, the release of oil or hazardous materials, and nuisances.

Food Inspections: Randall S. Phelps, owner of Phelps Food Service Consultants, contracted with the Health Department in October 2003 for the systematic inspection of the town's 150 establishments that sell or serve food to the public. Randy also investigates all complaints related to food service, and reviews plans for new food businesses and renovations to existing food establishments.

West Nile Virus: The Department continues to work closely with state epidemiologists and entomologists from the mosquito control program and the response plan on West Nile Virus. Two of the bird specimens sent to the state laboratory for analysis tested positive for West Nile Virus again this year. No human cases were reported in central Massachusetts.

Rabies: The Board of Health, the Animal Inspector, the Dog Officer, the Police Department, and local veterinarians have been working diligently to protect residents, domestic animals and livestock from rabies. Residents are advised to have their dogs and cats vaccinated against rabies as required by state law.

Bio Terrorism and Emergency Response Preparedness: The Department has worked cooperatively with Police, Fire and Emergency Management and the Town Manager to complete two needs assessment surveys and to comply with state and federal requirements to bring grants to the central Massachusetts region to establish plans and provisions for emergencies related to bio-terrorism or communicable disease and quarantine.

Lakes and Ponds: The Health Department received a grant for a study of Jordan Pond and completed the work in 2003. The study determined that the pond is not suitable for swimming and recommended actions that could be taken to preserve and restore the appearance of the pond. The Jordan Pond Advisory Committee has been meeting regularly and will continue to move forward with the study recommendations.

In 2003, the Health Department also administered the grant for the engineering and construction of stop log facilities at the Stringer Dam and the Route 20 culvert and the first annual draw down of Flint Pond was attempted. Numerous problems were encountered and the draw down was abandoned in December. The Health Department will work with the Lake Quinsigamond Commission to attempt another drawdown of Flint Pond in 2004.

IMMUNIZATION CLINICS: More than five hundred and eighty Shrewsbury residents were immunized against influenza in 2003. More than two hundred residents were also immunized against pneumonia.

The Board of Health recognizes the important contributions of Dr. Donovan, the school nurses, Evelyn Cummins and Alice Johnson (retired school nurses), and the student nurses from Fitchburg State College at these clinics. Without their continued support, the success of the immunization clinics would surely falter.

REFUSE COLLECTION INFORMATION: Pellegrino Trucking Company Inc. of Shrewsbury was awarded a five year contract for the collection of rubbish and recycling beginning in 1999. The Health Department is very pleased with the service provided by Pellegrino Trucking.

Residents are asked to review the following information and abide by the rules of the rubbish and recycling program:

1. Refuse collection is provided weekly to all residences with four or less apartments per dwelling. The Town will collect up to three containers of rubbish weekly from small business establishments.

2. Only refuse generated in Shrewsbury will be collected. Acceptable refuse includes: properly wrapped garbage, rags, rugs, furniture, boxes, automobile tires (not on a rim, 2 per week), and other residential rubbish. The following materials are **excluded** from the rubbish collection program: bricks, plaster, ashes, building or demolition debris, roofing or remodeling materials, all automobile parts, truck tires, swimming pools, fences, appliances, televisions and computers, leaves, grass clippings, yard waste, and recyclable materials.

3. Acceptable containers for refuse are tied plastic bags, or plastic or galvanized barrels. Containers shall have a capacity of not more than thirty gallons, and weigh not more than fifty pounds when full. Barrels should be equipped with handles, should be not less than 10 gallons and no more than 35 gallons in size, should be uniformly tapered so that the bottom is smaller than the top and should not be so tightly packed that their contents will not fall out when the barrel is inverted. Collectors will not reach into any barrel.

4. Corrugated cardboard may be recycled in the dumpster at the Municipal Garage on South Street from 7:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Monday through Friday.

5. Cardboard boxes and paper bags are not acceptable containers for rubbish and when used as such may remain uncollected.

6. All rubbish shall be placed on the property side of the street line before 7:00 A.M. on the day of collection. Empty containers should be removed as soon as possible after collection.

7. During adverse weather conditions, residents should take special precaution to ensure that containers remain visible and are not covered by snow during plowing operations.

8. When the collection schedule is interrupted by a holiday, all uncollected routes will be collected on the day following regularly scheduled pick-up. This will occur only on those holidays when the Town offices are closed, as follows:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Day	Columbus Day
President's Day	Veteran's Day
Patriot's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Independence Day	

Mercury: State regulations make it unlawful to dispose of the following items with the rubbish: fluorescent bulbs, thermometers, thermostats and other waste items which contain mercury. Fluorescent bulbs are accepted during the television and computer and paint drop-off events. Thermometers, thermostats, rechargeable batteries, button cell batteries and cell phones are accepted at the Health Department during normal business hours.

RECYCLING INFORMATION

The recyclable glass, metal, plastic, aluminum, and paper items described below are prohibited by state law and by the Town by-law from the rubbish collection program. These materials must be segregated from household rubbish and set out in the recycling bin provided by the Town for recycling.

1. Recyclable materials will be collected every other week on the same day that the rubbish is collected.

2. Materials which should be recycled but are in unacceptable condition (ex: wet or soiled newspaper, or broken glass) should be put out for disposal with the regular rubbish.
3. Households which generate more than one bin of recyclable materials over a two week period may set out additional plastic containers, of a size and construction similar to the bin provided, for the extra recyclables. Additional recycling bins are available for \$3.00 each at the Health Department. All of the acceptable recyclables set out at each household will be collected. Recycling bins should be left on the property for the new occupants when residents move.
4. New residents should visit the Health Department for a recycling bin and/or a collection calendar.